A very successful first workshop organized by the Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto Division) was held on April 14, 1991. A record crowd of 85 persons participated - far beyond the anticipated expectations and largely as a result of an aggressive advertising campaign which encompassed radio and newspaper coverage and flyers in Jewish stores throughout Toronto.

Dr. Stephen Speisman, Archivist of Toronto Jewish Congress and Canadian Jewish Congress (Ontario region) was the guest speaker. His chosen topic was "The History of the Jews of Toronto", based on his book published over a decade ago. In a very polished and accomplished manner he highlighted some of the pertinent, historical factors in the development of Toronto's Jewish Community.

Dr. Rolf Lederer outlined the various resources utilized in conducting genealogical research, while Bill Gladstone focussed on more specific avenues to be followed in terms of Russian research.

Peter Cullman gave a personal account of his own Holocaust research.

Audience participation was encouraged by dividing the attendees into four enthusiastic groups, along geographic lines. The quest for information was truly outstanding. A wrap-up session comprising the whole group was again most informative and educative.

The new Genealogical Starter Kit was presented to each participant on joining our society. This 20-page compilation of bibliographic information, names and addresses of archives and repositories, a beginners' guide and numerous pre-formed questionnaires for personal research correspondence had been ably put together by Peter Cullman, - in time for the workshop; the Kit will in the future be provided to all members.

As a result of the workshop, our membership has increased dramatically, thus hopefully injecting new thoughts and fresh ideas into the organization. This will enable our society to continue to be a vibrant body and to strive to reach higher levels.

Unquestionably, another workshop (for those who were unable to attend the first, and correcting some of its shortcomings), is being planned for the near future and should prove to be a useful template for hosting the International Summer Seminar on Jewish Genealogy in Toronto in 1993.

On behalf of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto Division), I would like to warmly welcome all new members.

The growth of a society such as ours can be measured directly in terms of its members' personal involvement, strength in numbers certainly helps to advance the quality of results in our chosen field of interest.

Each Jewish Genealogical Society is unique, even though the general goals and objectives of disseminating genealogical information may be shared by all the organizations. Thus the group in Washington, inspired by an able leadership, has forged important links between government bodies and the genealogical community. Likewise, in New York with its awesome (in terms of numbers) Jewish population, the Society has addressed these issues in a most dramatic way. Chicago too has a special place, by way of reaching a wide audience through their journal SEARCH, complimentary to AVOTAYNU. Numerous other notable examples could be cited.

Communication in genealogy remains one of the most important tools to unravel the various threads in order to complete the family tree puzzle. Whether it is through the Family Finder, publications of the various societies or archival research, all play an important role in filling in the blanks. At the root of all, however, lies the ability of all researchers to communicate with one another, to use the fast growing network of enthusiasts. One cannot emphasize strongly enough the personal benefits derived from sharing.

I dare say that English is the most favored lingua franca of the majority of Jewish researchers today. Yet any non-English speaking members feel most welcome in the large family, even if they conduct their meetings in Hebrew, French, German or Dutch. By sharing our journals, even if not all written in the same language, the information contained therein enriches and advances the progress of all of us.
At our meetings

April 24: The field trip to the LDS Family History Library in Etobicoke was truly over subscribed. More than twenty enthusiastic and inquisitive members attended. Although it became difficult for the staff of the library to present the fascinating holdings in a relaxed manner, considering the limited space at the facility, the presentation gave those who attended for the first time a taste of the seemingly unlimited research capacities there. Needless to say, further excursions, albeit in restricted numbers, are planned in the near future.

However, it should be noted here that the Family History Library is open all year to any researcher; advance reservations of the computer or the microfiche/film readers are essential though. The helpful staff will be glad to assist anyone using the library for the first time. Tel. 621-4607

May 29: Mr. Angus Baxter was the guest speaker, recounting his own genealogical experiences which extended well over several decades. We were privileged to have such an eminent researcher and author of numerous books on genealogy at our meeting, expanding on do's and don'ts in family research.

The light hearted presentation left many in the audience encouraged to explore avenues previously not encountered. At one stage we learned of the case of a person long thought to be deceased because of the biblical age this person would have been in, only to learn that no such assumption should be made outright: this person had indeed lived to be 105 years old. - Mr. Baxter missed a possible interview with him by three months...

New Members

The following new members are welcomed to our society:

John Anhang, Honey Biggs, Carol Bleiwas,
Elly Bollegraaf, Robert Cook, Jeffrey Cutler,
Judith Deri, Catherine Da Costa, Ruth Ellenweig,
Sandra Y. Ezrin, Karen Fejer, Harvey Freeman,
Harold Fealdman, Dr. S. Fruitman, Sharron Fruitman,
Helen Goodman, Lilian Granek, Dr. Cyril Gryfe,
Robert Gutman, Herbert Gultman, Sydney Klug,
Harry Koltarsky, Lesley Krumins, Mark Lichtenhal,
Joyce L. Lieberman, Marc Linett, Blanche S. Loeb,
Robert Lowy, Diane Nishri, Paul Pascal,
Phyllis Rose, Ed. Rotstein, Dr. Edw. Sheffman,
Joel Slan, Ronald T. Smith, Gertie Uger,
Peter Vadas.

Volunteers urgently needed!

- The mandate for the Cemetery Committee this summer is to document as much of Roselawn Cemetery as possible. Vandalism, acid rain and neglected sections lend great urgency to this project!

We desperately need additional volunteers who will go out and help with this project!

Please call Gert Rogers: 588-2318, for dates and times of meetings at the cemetery.

Upcoming dates for meetings

Please note:

- Prompted by the vastly expanded membership it will no longer be feasible to make reminding telephone calls to every member prior to monthly meetings. Dates, times and topics of future meetings will henceforth only be announced in SHEM TOV, the Canadian Jewish News and at the beginning of our meetings.

The following are the dates for meetings of our society for the remaining part of this year, always beginning at 7:30 p.m.

July + August: NO MEETINGS
September 25, 1991
October 30, 1991
November 27, 1991
December 18, 1991

The Genealogical Starter Kit

A new genealogical Starter Kit is now available to all members. Any member who has not yet received the Kit is urged to pick one up at the forthcoming meetings; size, weight and high postage do not permit us to mail them out.

- A reminder to all members: Please return the completed yellow questionnaire that is included with your Starter Kit. Spare questionnaires are available at meetings.

Your views, opinions and suggestions are vital to the functioning of our society!

How are we going to write 3 February 2001?

That date is only ten years away. and if we do nothing, there will be some misunderstanding. Consider:

Those with computers will write: 010203.
Our American friends will write: 2/3/1.
Our English friends will write: 3/2/1.
LDS will call it: 03Feb2001.
NATO may call it: 03FeO 1.
Our relatives will write: Feb.3/0 1.
Legal documents may have: On the third day of February in the year two thousand and one.

Of all the arrangements. the LDS one seems most useful to genealogists, for it can only be interpreted one way, and is reasonably short. However, will it permit computers to record various items in chronological order? And does FEB offend genealogists using other languages?

During this decade, we should try to standardize this matter, at least for genealogists. What is needed is a method that is acceptable in all countries where genealogy is an active hobby.

Think it over. then compose a letter to the Editor of FAMILIES, the quarterly newsletter published by the Ontario Genealogical Society, Suite 251, 40 Orchard View Blvd., Toronto, Ontario M4R 1B9 CANADA.

Suggestions will be evaluated - perhaps a standard can then be announced.

[This article may be copied by other genealogical magazines and newsletters around the world.]
1. ROOTS III

Features: Context sensitive help; documentation includes publishing guide; up to 65,000 individuals, marriages and place names; 6 events per individual or marriage; no limit to number of marriages per individual; up to 31 children per marriage; 60 characters for names; 48 characters for place names; can footnote every field; ditto feature; can search on any field or several at the same time.

Charts: 95 generation pedigree (6 or 8 generations per page), descendants, individual, family group ahnentafel, relationship list, calendar list, notes and references, index

Options: Roots Write and Revent - split screen editor and historical database; Calendar and Historiograph - calendar converter (including Hebrew calendar); GEDCOM; RPILOT - graphical chart maker.

Demonstration disk: Tutorial disk available separately or included.

Systems: IBM and compatibles, Tandy, Apple, Macintosh

Price: About $300. Options are extra.

Contact: Gregory Harris, Box 184, Station G. Toronto, Ont., M4M 3G7; (416) 694-8833.

2. FAMILY ROOTS Versi:n 3.3

Features: 9 user definable fields; add footnotes with any word processor; unlimited number of notes; use your own numbering system or theirs; search on any field or several at the same time; can define maximum number of children per marriage; number of individuals per database depends on disk size; telephone and mail technical support.

Charts: pedigree (any number of generations), descendants, individual, family group, Ahnentafel. Charts can be customized

Systems: IBM and compatibles, Tandy, Apple, Macintosh, Commodore

Price: $220 - 275, depending on computer system.

Contact: James Low Documentation, 111 Rainsford Rd., Toronto, Ont., M4L 3N8; (416) 690-3943.

3. PERSONAL ANCESTRAL FILE (PAF) Version 2.2

Features: Produced by LDS; on-line help, telephone and mail technical support; 4 fields for locations; can enter children of individual without entering marriage data i.e. spouse unknown; can navigate pedigree chart to select an individual for processing; each note is a single line and can be individually flagged for printing; supports Soundex search; includes date calculator; imports and exports GEDCOM in PAF 2.0 and 2.1 formats; ditto feature; search on more than one field at once; Apple II allows about 500 people in database, DOS and Macintosh versions allow up to 65,000.

Charts: pedigree, individual, family group, ancestor, cascading, pedigree, Ahnentafel (DOS only).

Systems: IBM and compatibles, Macintosh, Apple II

Price: U.S. $35

Contact: Local branch of LDS Church for details.

4. BROTHER'S KEEPER Version 4.3

Features: Manual is on disk with program; telephone and mail technical support; imports GEDCOM in PAF 2.0 and 2.1 formats, exports in PAF 2.1 format; six user definable fields; five character source reference per event; search on several fields at once; 15,000 individuals per database; can tie external text file to each record; add individuals via family group sheet; does not run in DOS 4.01.

Charts: ancestors, descendants, family groups, tree of descendants, Ahnentafel; lists: by record number, alphabetical, birthdays.

Systems: IBM and compatibles

Price: US $40 (Shareware)

Contact: John Steed, 6907 Childsdale Rd., Reciderei, MI 49341

5. FAMILY TIES Version 1.5

Features: Manual is on disk with program; charge for mail technical support; first DOS version; clumsy user interface; individuals entered via family group sheet; 4 fields of 64 characters each for names; ditto feature for names, places and commands; no user numbering scheme; some LDS fields and features; can denote accuracy of dates; can't delete incorrect spellings from database; deleted notes permanently stored as blank lines.

Charts: pedigree, family groups. Needs wide paper or printer that can do compressed print.

Systems: IBM and compatibles

Price: US $50 (SHAREWARE)

Contact: Neil Wagstaff, Computer Services, 1050 East 800 South, Provo, Utah 84601

6. FAMILY TREE ETC. Version 5.03

Features: Manual is on disk with program; drop-down menus; technical support by mail; 20 characters for locations; 26 characters for name field, search by name only; no user definable fields; must enter dummy record for unknown spouse if you want to record children; 10 lines only for notes; no numbering scheme; well laid out; separate modes for data entry versus printing charts; good program for children or occasional dabbler.

Charts: pedigree, descendants, ancestors, family groups, relationships, book format, pedigree, book format family history, link between 2 people.

Systems: IBM and compatibles

Price: US $35 (Shareware)

Contact: Fine Cone Software, P.O. Box 1163, Columbus, Indiana 47202 - 1163

GENEALOGICAL COMPUTING magazine reviews software on an ongoing basis, of interest to genealogists. The Jul./Aug. 90 issue of GENEALOGICAL COMPUTING (Vol.10, Number 1) listed 42 different programs for genealogical databases. Other lists included programs for creating charts, writing a family history, indexing and various research tools. Lists are updated annually. Copies of the magazine are available in the open stacks on the fourth floor of the Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library, 789 Yonge St, Toronto.
Several years ago, we greeted with excitement rumors that the new "openness" of Soviet society would soon herald a new age of information-sharing between East and West. Then came reports of teams of Jewish genealogists travelling into Moscow, Leningrad, Minsk and other towns deep in the heart of the former Pale of Settlement and thus deeply rooted in our own nostalgic hearts. They returned with encouraging signs that glasnost would soon make hordes of archival materials accessible.

The Russian Consular Records: In part, the Soviets' new positive attitude reflected their official pleasure at receiving back the first two boxes of Russian Consular Records from an American archival commission. From 1917 until their rediscovery in 1980, hundreds of boxes of these records, containing more than 200,000 case files of Russian immigrants to North America, many Jewish, were forgotten, and gathering dust. Now the rest of this extraordinary collection has been shipped to the USSR as an expression of American appreciation for glasnost.

As an example of their usefulness, National Archivist, Lawrence Tapper found a dossier pertaining to his grandfather, filled with postcards from the old country, a questionnaire, an affidavit and snapshots. Microfilmed and indexed, copies of these documents are available through the National Archives in Ottawa.

Soviet-American Task Force Established: In the spring of 1989, the chief archivists of the United States and the Soviet Union signed a cooperative agreement for wide sharing of genealogical resources. Rabbi Malcolm Stern reported in Avotaynu the following winter that a task force -- the Soviet American Genealogical Archival Service (SAGAS) -- had been set up as a sort of clearinghouse for genealogical correspondence between the two countries. SAGAS was tasked to set research fees (based on Soviet rather than American pay scales), translate requests back and forth, and handle other matters. The American SAGAS team toured eight archives in Moscow, Minsk and Leningrad in Mach 1990, and spent much time explaining to their Soviet counterparts the concept of family history as opposed to family heraldry.

"Strike While the Iron is Hot" was the title of editor Sallyann Sack's positive but cautious editorial in the 1990 winter issue of Avotaynu. She related that genealogy was indeed reaping the rewards of glasnost, but slowly. "With reports of unrest in the Soviet Union, should we be planning for the possibility that glasnost is a temporary thing?" she asked.

YIVO'S Recent Major Discovery in Lithuania: Sack related that many know from bitter experience that opportunities that are here today may be gone tomorrow. During wartime, for instance, the YIVO Institute was only two-thirds finished shipping its vast collection from Vilna to Frankfurt, thence to New York, when the Nazis apparently intervened. YIVO recently rediscovered the missing third of its collection in the Central State Historical Archives in Vilnius. These documents describe Jewish births, marriages and deaths in 32 Lithuanian communities dating back to 1800 and even earlier.

Bloom Fading From Glasnost Rose: In the 1991 Spring issue of AVOTAYNU, Sack wrote that factors like political instability in the Baltic states, the Gulf War and the massive Exodus for Soviet Jews were having a negative effect on the availability of Soviet genealogical records, and that Glavarchiv, the main archival administration in the USSR seemed to be stalling.

Mormons Microfilming in East Germany: To learn what Jewish records the Mormons have been collecting in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in recent years, I spoke to several librarians in Salt Lake City. Apparently, teams of microfilmmers are busy in Poland. Alas, no new Polish-Jewish records are being microfilmed there. But in the eastern section of what used to be pre-war Germany, which includes East Prussia and territories once part of Lithuania, the Mormons are evidently microfilming everything in sight, including previously inaccessible Jewish records from pre WWI era.

Conversation with Mokotoff: Salt Lake City referred me to AVOTAYNU publisher, Gary Mokotoff, for the latest word, and Mokotoff gave it to me. According to this foremost and highly-attuned expert in the field, its most significant advances lately include YIVO's discoveries in Lithuania ("an incredible breakthrough"); the increased availability of German-Jewish records; and the recent resurfacing of Russian Business Directories and other materials of interest in Western libraries.

Collapse of Soviet-American Agreement: Despite this seeming cornucopia of advances, there have been some very fresh wounds to both the letter and the spirit of the Soviet-American archival exchange. The latest news is that SAGAS, the cooperative agreement between the archives of both countries, has recently been effectively cancelled. As Mokotoff explained, there has been a change of management in the Soviet Union, and the new director is simply not interested in pursuing this joint venture.

Recommended Strategy: At the moment, it seems, individuals stand a better chance of getting through to Soviet archives than official delegations. The key, apparently, is to innovate and to be creative. Mokotoff recommends writing directly to the mayor or director of the municipal museum of your ancestral town. Start with a simple, non-threatening request for literature; don't mention vital records at first. Try to establish a rapport with a sympathetic individual through three or four letters before getting down to the business of civil registration records.

However, before you spend money on GST for international postage stamps, make sure the records you're seeking aren't already part of the Mormon collection. As in many things in life, the object of your search may be no further than your own backyard...
Holocaust Research
By Peter Cullman

[An excerpt of a talk given at the workshop, April 14, 1991]

My talk will be a very personal account and it is but a very brief summery of my years of research. For the purpose of this presentation I have separated my subject into five groups.

1. What is Holocaust research?

When we think of Holocaust research we set out on an emotional journey, hoping to find traces of members of our close and extended family who were lost in the Holocaust. Sadly, in many cases we discover the fate of those who have perished, though in some instances we may still find survivors or indeed surviving children of those who were lost. Contrary to popular belief, although the Holocaust destroyed lives, it did not set out to destroy records. The absurdity is in fact that the Nazi bureaucracy occupied itself for years with records of people who had long since perished.

2. How did I get involved in Holocaust research?

My own family research began over 25 years ago when I tried to find a “Rosenberg” cousin who had immigrated to Philadelphia. Actively I have been researching my late mother’s family for seven years. But my Holocaust research began only after I had built up almost the entire family tree of my mother’s, by making extensive use of the Mormon resources. Then I realized how many people in this new collection of names had vanished without trace. Like others, I too had thought naively that my family was not affected by the Holocaust, and the reason was that very little knowledge about my family had been transmitted to me.

By beginning a general family research I virtually stumbled upon entire lines whose fate was unknown. In many cases I had only found names. And often only through lengthy correspondence with newly-found relatives was I told that someone was never heard of since the beginning of the war...

In this way one may say, my Holocaust research began as an essential end product of my family research.

3. Who did I search for?

In some cases I had names, but I did not know who the parents were, and in other cases I knew of a married couple and wondered why I had no information on their children. My mother had once mentioned that her half-brother had been deported. She didn’t speak of him, perhaps she knew nothing else and had most probably never doubted his tragic fate.

I set out to search for him.

My wife’s family mentioned an uncle Philip who had never been heard of in Lithuania after the war.

I set out to search for him.

The feeling that I had left out an important section of my family research by not knowing what had become of these cousins became an obsession. And as I started out on this new route I found that I had embarked on an all absorbing venture with no end in sight.

4. Where did I begin – 5. What did I find?

As my general research had centred around my own German Jewish background in Berlin, I got involved in a lengthy correspondence with the administration of the huge Jewish cemetery in East-Berlin. Here lay the foundation of my family tree. Here I also discovered those who had committed suicide to avoid being deported in 1941. I discovered the graves of parents, and the meticulously kept cemetery records showed the names of the children and even their last place of residence in Berlin, leaving the question: what became of them? Could there be a ‘deportation list’ of all the Jews of Berlin?

Letters to Yad Vashem revealed several Pages of Testimony for members of my family. I also learned that, in collaboration with Yad Vashem, a 2-volume memorial book had just been published in West Germany, giving 128,000 names, dates of birth and last places of residence. Only the Leo Baeck Institute in New York had the Gedenkbuch and I went there specifically to examine all the names; then checked again for maiden names only. My efforts were rewarding, but they left me with many more questions, because even though I had found or confirmed some names – I didn’t see others which I had expected.

I corresponded with the International Tracing Service in Germany, an agency of the Red Cross which keeps millions of records of people who have perished as a result of the Holocaust. Here I completed some of my investigations, although it took nearly a year to get all replies.

Finally, two years ago I went to Berlin to do a more detailed research. My visit was timely as I was somewhat privileged to see the original Gestapo records and the questionnaires as filled out by many of my family, before they were deported: the basis of the deportation lists mentioned earlier. The entire collection has now been moved permanently to the Berlin Landesarchiv, a few blocks across town.

The Restitution Offices in Berlin, 45 years after the end of the war, are today little more than archives. Restitution claims have long been settled and only a few of the recipients may still be alive. Yet, armed with a list of names from my files, I had hoped that some light may be shed on the fate of some survivors who could perhaps still be contacted, if indeed they were alive.

Understandably the Restitution Office will not reveal addresses in their files without the person’s consent, but will certainly try to contact any surviving person in their files on one’s behalf and then put one in touch if consent is given.

In this way I found two surviving children of my mother’s half-brother, mentioned earlier, who had gone onto the Kindertransport in 1939 and moved to the USA in 1948. An emotional first visit took place last year when we met in Florida.

Another ‘find’ was the 79 year old son of my great aunt, living in N.Y. since 1938. He had responded excitedly to a letter sent to him by the Restitution Office on my behalf.

Neither of us had known of the existence of the other!

And finally, after much persistence for many years, this route lead me to the family of the earlier mentioned Rosenberg cousin who had gone to Philadelphia! Sadly, only the widow, now living in New Jersey, was able to reply to the Restitution Office, my cousin had died the year before.

Spiritually enriched and emotionally drained at times, - my work is far from over, questions abound. Patience, tenacity and the creative mind of a detective will keep me searching for much longer. The search for my roots has shown me the way to the branches, - a life-long endeavour...
Our Members' Research: An Inspiration To Others
(The first of a series of articles on the research work done by our members: their beginnings, tribulations and successes.)

Sheryl Erenberg

My interest in genealogy began with a high school assignment on family trees. I spent many Friday evenings interviewing my grandfather and transcribing a wealth of family stories. Several afternoons were also set aside for me by the grandparents to go through the box of family photos, something I enjoyed immensely. My project was submitted, graded, returned and subsequently lost when it was mailed to a relative.

Still, I had my notes and remembered how much I enjoyed listening to tales of people I'd never met: How my grandfather, aged 5, cried on the dock as his family boarded ship for America because he had to leave behind his toys; or how a great aunt from South Africa bequeathed money to her brother in New York (my great-grandfather) with whom she had lost touch; my grandmother's memories of being taken to Anarchist meetings in New York and racing out as the police raided in. All of these I listened to with fascination.

I started writing letters to my grandmother's sisters and brothers (family name: Lappitt) seeking additional information: dates of arrival, birth, marriage, etc. Slowly I was able to piece together the chronology of events. My letters spanned years and sometimes went unanswered. I soon realized that not everyone shared my love of correspondence and so, to guarantee replies, I started to use the questionnaire format -- something my relatives could simply fill in and return.

At about this time I heard about the Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto and attended my first meeting. I discovered so many new places to research and people to contact that I was completely overwhelmed. I wrote 16 letters after the first meeting and received copies of marriage licences from Britain, immigration papers from New Jersey and letters from distant relatives I'd never met before. I visited Toronto cemeteries transcribing headstones (most people I spoke to thought those visits were peculiar...). I was thrilled to be filling in so many blanks on my tree and then sharing my research with everyone who'd helped me. Each reply spurred me on. I started to be approached at family gatherings about my progress and I used the opportunity to gather as much information as I could.

Eventually, my research led me to Poland (Opatow) and Lithuania (Vilna) where records were difficult to obtain, if not altogether impossible. Through the JGS I learned of the Mormon Library in Salt Lake City and finally made the trek into the depths of Etobicoke to investigate. Having filled out a request for microfilm transfer from Salt Lake City I waited for three weeks for the phone call, telling me that the films had arrived. After perusing them I left with 60 pages of Polish civil documents to translate! The JGS suggested a handy-dandy little publication from the Illinois Genealogical Society entitled "A translation guide to 19th century Polish language civil registration documents..."

Prior to my voyage to Etobicoke I learned that access to documents and research in the U.S.S.R. and Poland was beginning to open up so I wrote to Warsaw for a birth certificate. Readers are warned not to attempt this without a lot of U.S. dollars and time (not necessarily in that order). They may also be advised not to write to Poland directly before first visiting the Mormon library where many of the documents are available.

My inquiry to the Archives in Warsaw was replied to in five months. The reply, in Polish, was to forward $60-00 in advance. I decided to wire the funds through a Polish travel agency (on Queen St. West) so that there would be some record if ever a trace was later required. Since advanced copying technology has not yet reached Warsaw, I was disappointed in the legibility of the copy I received. It also turned out to be written in Old Russian and now the search is on for a translator...

I am presently pursuing a 'lead' on the Lappitt (my mother's) side of my family tree in Cordoba, Argentina, having obtained an old photograph bearing that city's stamp.

Needless to say, - the search goes on...

*Address of the Polish Archives:
Naczelna Dyrekcja, Archiwum Państwowych, ul. Dluga 6, skrytka poczlowa Nr 1005, 00-950 Warszawa.

Henry Wellisch

When, in 1981, I decided to investigate the background of my family I had only some knowledge of my mother's family, but knew very little of my father's ancestry. I was aware that both families came from the town of Moson in Western Hungary and that they had moved to Vienna near the end of the 19th century. During the 1930's I had visited Moson and remember some of the family members living there at the time.

My research began in all earnest after reading two of the more important books on Jewish genealogy, A. Kurzweil's 'From Generation to Generation' and D. Rottenberg's 'Finding our Fathers'. I then also started my seemingly endless correspondence with relatives, literally all over the world and actually discovered some whose existence I was not aware of. Some now live in Canada, U.S.A., Mexico, Brazil, Chile, Argentina, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Holland and Israel.

Apart from the information received from my relatives, I found the most profitable sources to be the microfilm record collection of the Mormon Church in Salt Lake City. After analyzing the birth, marriage and death records for Moson and other towns in the area and also the Jewish Hungarian census of 1848, I was able to construct a fairly comprehensive family tree for both my father's and my mother's families, going back five generations. I was fortunate to find in Toronto and Hamilton some people from Moson who turned out to be distantly related and from whom I received some vital information on my family.

[cont'd on page 11]
The Development of Jewish First Names in the Austrian Empire.

[This article represents an interesting account of the Jews' on the road to emancipation. The lengthy debates on the basic rights we take for granted today illuminate the struggle of our ancestors and may give the reader a better understanding of life nearly two centuries ago. The article is based on 'A study of the development of Jewish personal names of modern times' by Dr. Wenzel Zacek. It appeared (in German) in the yearbook of the Society for the History of the Jews of the Czechoslovak Republic in 1936. Dr. Zacek used mainly the original documents from the archives of the Czechoslovak ministry of the interior in Prague. Some documents from the archives of the city of Prague and the National Museum were also consulted. Since the archives of the Austrian Ministry of Justice were destroyed in 1927, these are the only documents in existence dealing with this subject. Translation by Henry Wollisch.]

I. The Josephinian reform of Jewish names.

On July 20, 1836 the Austrian government published a decree by which Jews were no longer prohibited from bearing German first names, including those used by Christians. This event brought to a conclusion a process that had started fifty years before.

Emperor Joseph II of Austria, a 'progressive' ruler, in 1780 introduced far reaching reforms which included also the removal of many restrictions from the Jews of the Austrian Empire.

Amongst the various reforms, the regulations dealing with the Jewish first and family names played an important part. The Emperor felt that by giving Jews proper German names they could be better integrated into the society. Also the confusing situation with some Jews being known under several names would be brought to an end. The initiative for this development came from the administration of the crown land of Galicia, the Gubernium. The elders of the Prague Jewish community, when consulted, were opposed but the Gubernium went ahead and sent a preliminary proposal to Vienna. There the court chancellery (Hofkanzlei) considered the proposal and forwarded it with some comments for final decision to the state council (Staatsrat). After some discussion and favourable recommendations the Emperor approved "the patent for the regulation of Jewish names". It was published on July 1787. The patent applied to all Austrian crown lands, to Hungary and to Transylvania. In 1804 it was extended to the crown land of Galicia. The patent consisted of seven articles:

1) All Jewish heads of families and single Jews are obliged by January 1, 1788 to take on a permanent family name. Unmarried females have to take on the name of their father, married females the name of their husband. All persons have to take on a German first name, which cannot be altered during their life time.

2) Jewish family names relating to a locality are prohibited.

3) Every head of household has to register his name and the names in his family in German by November 30, 1787.

4) Starting January 1, 1788, all circumcision, birth, death - and marriage registers have to be in German.

5) This article explains how to fill in the registration form.

6) This article gives the assurance that all documents signed with the old name are still valid.

7) This article lists the penalties for non-compliance.

The direction of the patent was clear. Only later did it become apparent that it had not been precisely specified what was meant by a 'German' first name. The reaction of the Jews came on September 21, 1787 when the leaders of the Prague Jewish community, speaking in the name of all Jews, commented as follows:

1.) Jews should be allowed to retain their present Jewish first names as long as these could be written and pronounced in German. Various reasons were given to support this. It was pointed out for instance that the change in the name of business firms, some of which were known under their current name for several generations, would lead to confusion. However, it seems that the underlying reason was the fear of orthodox Jewish circles, that the acceptance of German first names would have a negative effect on the Jewish religious faith.

2.) Jews should be permitted, if they so desired, to have a second or middle name. The reason given was that most Jewish families gave their children next to their names, also the names of their father or grandfather.

3.) Jews whose family names had been used for many generations should be allowed to retain them in the German language. This referred especially to those families whose family names were based on their present or previous domicile. It was recommended not to extend this permission to those Jews who continuously changed their family names with their domicile.

4.) Finally, the Jewish elders asked, in view of the size of the country, not to punish those who failed to submit their registration form on time.

The Gubernium forwarded the Jewish petition to the court chancellery with the following comments:

There should be no objection to the use of Jewish names as long as they exist in German such as Samuel or Solomon. However, vulgar or bowdlerized versions of those names such as Schmul or Schlomo should be prohibited. Otherwise the Gubernium had no objection to the Jewish proposals.

At the same time it invited the official translator of the Hebrew language, Leopold Tirsch, to prepare a list of all Jewish names that are used in the German language. Tirsch was advised that the purpose was to assist the Jews in the selection of their names in the proper German version.

The court chancellery dealt with the issue promptly with its decree dated Oct. 11, 1787. In response to item 1 in the Jewish petition it gave the Jews nearly complete choice of first names. It also added, that the chosen German names were permanent and that after Jan. 1, 1788, Hebrew and Jewish names were prohibited. Item 2, pertaining to second or middle names was rejected with a few exceptions. Item 3, pertaining to family names was accepted with minor changes.

With the enactment of the patent of July 23, 1787 and the Court decree of Oct. 11, 1787 Jews were permitted to use

[cont'd on page 8]
any German name or names that could be adapted to German. However, the authorities felt that Jews did not have the knowledge to choose the proper names in the German language. The list being prepared by Tirsch would assist them. Tirsch completed his list at the end of Oct, 1787 and it was then sent to Vienna for approval. There the court chanceller subjected the list to a critical scrutiny; the result being that the list was found to be unsuitable since it consisted mostly of Hebrew names. The list was therefore revised, certain names were deleted and a new list was established and published under court decree dated Nov. 12, 1787. The decree reaffirmed that in the choice of first names only German names could be used and the Jews were advised to consult the approved list. Other names were strictly prohibited. The registration period was extended.

The new list contained the following names: ABADIAS, ABEL, HEVEL, ABDIEL, ABDON, ABDENAGO, ABISOLO, ABIAS, ABIRAM, ABADON, ABRAHAM, ACHITOPHEL, ADAM, ODON, ALEXANDER, AMMINADAB, ANANIAS, ANDREAS, ANGELUS, ARIEL, ARNON, ARON; BALTHASAR, BARNABAS, BARTOLOMAUS, BEER, BEERMANN, BENEDIKT, BENESCH, BENJAMIN, BERNARD; DAMIAN, DAM, DANIEL, DAVID; ELEASAR, ELIAS, ELIACIM, ELISÁUS, EMANUEL, IMMONUEL, ENOS, EPHRAIM, Ezechias, Ezechiel; FRIDMAN; GABRIEL, GEDEON, GOTTLIEB; HAYAKUK, HENOCH, HEBRON; JAKOB, JAPHET, JASON, JEREMIAS, JOACHIM, JOANNES, JOB, JONAS, JONATHAN, JORAM, JOSAPHAT, JOSEPH, JOSIAS, JOSUA,ISAIAH, ISAAK, ISMAEL, ISRAEL; JUDA, JUDAS; KABRIEL, KOPPELMANN; LASER, LAZAR, LEVI, LUKAS; MATHES, MATHIAS, MANASSES, MARKUS, MATHUSALEM, MICHAEL, MOISES; NABUCHODONOSOR, NATHAN, NATHANIEL, NEHEMIA, NEPHTAI, NIKANOR, NOE; OCHOSIAS, OSISIA; PAUL, PHILIP, RAPHAEL, SALOMON, SAMSON, SAMUEL, SELIGMAN, SENG, SETH, SIMEON; SISARA, SOROBAEL, THADUAS, THOMAS, TOBIAS; WOLF; ZABULON, ZACHARIAS, ZACHÜS.

Female names: 
ABIGAIL, AGATHA, AGNES, AMALIA, ANNA, ASPASIA, ATHALIA; BARBARA; CAZILIA; DEMUTH, DOROTHEA; ELIZABETH, ESTER, EVA; IOANNA; IPHIGENIA, JUDITH, JULIA; LIBUSCHA, LUZIA; MAGDALENA, MARIA, MARTHA; NIKOLAIA; PAULA; RACHEL, REBECKA, REGINA, ROSA, ROSALIA, ROSEL, SARA, SEMIRAMITH, SUSANNA, SYBILLA.

Following is a partial list of the names that were deleted from Tirsch's list by the court chanceller: 
ANSELMO, ASCHER, BEZALEL, BARUCH, EVIGDOR, GERSHE, GUMPELMAN, KALMAN, KAMAN, KOSAN, MAYER, MESCHULEM, PERUTZ, PINKAS, SUSMAN, BASSIA, BELA BILKA, BLUMA, BUNA, BLIMCHE, DINA, DEVORA, ELKA, EDEL, FROMET, GELA, GUTEL, HINDEL, HANERLE, KELA, LIVITA, MALKA, NACHAMA, PESEL, PERL, RACHAMA, SVUIA, SIREL.

It is no wonder then, that the Jews appealed on December 4, 1787 directly to the Emperor, to broaden the choice of first names. They asked for permission to use the German version of all names from the bible and its five books of Moses. They pointed out that they, as well as followers of other religions, took their names from the bible, while some names on the approved list did not originate there. It was also pointed out that 110 male and 35 female names were insufficient for the Jewish population and that this could lead to mistakes and misunderstandings. This appeal had only limited success. The following names were then added to the approved list: FALKMANN, GUTTMANN, HEILMANN, HERZ, HIRSCHMANN, LIEBERMANN, LIPPMANN, LÖW, SIMON, VEIT. KLARA, LEA.

The deadline for registration was moved to Jan 15, 1788. The Jews accepted the response and this brought to an end the Josephinian reforms of Jewish names. The patent and the various decrees were incorporated into the collection of Jewish laws in 1792 and were again published in 1797 as part of the 'Judische Systempatent.'

II. The Fight of the Jews for Free Choice of First Names.

Over several decades the Josephinian laws regarding Jewish names were, to all appearances, observed. In those days when the father registered the name of the new born child with the municipality, the official checked the first name against the approved list. The Jews were more or less satisfied with the arrangement, but in the earlier decades of the 19th century a new generation which had grown up during the period of the Josephinian reforms were becoming dissatisfied with the restrictions on the free choice of first names. It was in Prague, one of the large Jewish centres of the empire, where the opposition to the restrictions was organised. It seems also that it was in Bohemia and especially in Prague where an anti-semitic city administration enforced the law strictly.

The first challenge came in 1828 when a Jew form Prague, Benjamin Katzan, registered his new born son as LUDWIG. His registration from was returned. Katzan then appealed to the Gubernium. His petition included detailed arguments which took into account the various Josephinian ordinances. His arguments set an example for numerous later petitions. Katzan first of all argued that the decree of Nov 12, 1787 limiting the choice of first names was an inadmissible interpretation of the patent of July 23, 1787, which was confirmed by court decree of Oct 11, 1787. Katzan maintained that the decree of Nov. 12, 1787 was only issued because the stubborn old-fashioned Polish Jews refused to give up their favourite names, thus urging the authorities to issue a list of old Jewish names in a German version, this being a concession to those Jews who wanted to maintain very ancient Jewish names. Katzan maintained that the rejection of his application was surprising since such restrictions were only in effect in Bohemia. Finally, he asked in the name of the Jews of Prague to end all restrictions in the selection of German first names. The Gubernium sent Katzan's application first of all to the city council of Prague for comment. The council decided by a narrow majority that there was merit in Katzan's application, thereby reversing their previous practice. The final decision was now left with the Gubernium. These worthies, however, rejected Katzan's application on Dec 18, 1828. However, Katzan's attempt was only a prelude to a much better organized collective action by the Jews of Prague which followed immediately Katzan's failed attempt.
Six Jews from Prague, Katzan amongst them, submitted on Feb 26, 1828, a new application to the Gubernium, but were advised to send it directly to the Court Chancellery in Vienna. This application contained amongst the arguments Katzan had used further arguments supporting the Jewish case.

The Chancellery, asking for comments, sent it to the Gubernium which after consulting the Prague city council and the fiscal department, returned it to Vienna with the advice to reject the latest Jewish petition. This, the Court Chancellery did with a court decree of Aug. 26, 1830.

However, this was not the end. A petition signed by a large number of Jews accompanied by a brief from the leaders of the Prague Jewish community, was sent to the Court Chancellery on June 15, 1831. From there it went back again to the Gubernium, which decided to ask the Jewish senior jurist, Landan, to compile a list of significant German first names. During the debate, some councillors voiced their concern that the Jews might choose the names of Christian saints, which could lead to unrest. Therefore, Landan was instructed to prove from the old testament that any names of Christian saints on the list had any Jewish significance. After protracted negotiations between the Jewish leadership and Landan on the one side and the Gubernium on the other, the new list was submitted in December of 1832. The Gubernium then asked the official Hebrew translator, Karl Fischer, to comment on Landan's list. It was favourable.

By this time the Jews had become impatient and on April 29, 1833, they enquired on the progress of their application. The Gubernium in the meantime decided to hear the opinion of the Catholic consistory of Prague.

The preamble of the consistory's reply speaks for itself:

"For a long time religious Catholics have been annoyed to see the names of their highly honoured and venerated saints preferred by the Jews, when they see that Jews give these names to their children and thereby appear by name as Christians, but are and remain Jews."

This quote gives an indication of the content of the eleven closely spaced pages that followed. The Consistory professed to be indifferent, that on the list were the names of martyrs who had converted to Christianity and names of recently canonized saints who had been arbitrarily linked to the Old Testament by the Jews. There is a big difference between religion and civic rights. The Christian church is infirm in its dogma and united. Those who want to be members have to accept its dogma and must become Christians from the bottom of their heart. The church is not in business, does not bargain and cannot diminish its doctrine of faith, arrangements or remedies.

Amongst other things the Consistory asked to strike from the approved list the names of Christian saints (BERNARD, DAMIAN, LUKAS, MARKUS, VEIT, AGATHE, ASPASIA, BARBARA, CECILIA and others.) The church wanted only to protect the names of the saints from profanation, and had no objection to the use of Persian or Greek names for Jewish children. To this the Consistory added ironicaly: "It may sound ridiculous for Jewish children to have names of heroes when it is known that Jews are not cut out to be either heroes or brave soldiers." The Consistory, after eliminating from the list 28 male and 25 female non-Jewish names, enclosed a new list of 342 male and 45 female names, all taken from the Old Testament. This list consisted mostly of obscure and totally obsolete names such as (male): ABDIMLUCH, ABDINADAB, ADONIBESECH, ACHIMELECH, and (female): ACHSA, BASEMATH, MAACHA, SUNAMITTINN and others.

It was explained by the consistory, that the enlarged number of names would accommodate the Jewish request for greater diversity and it was also suggested that the female list could be increased by adding a female ending (for instance the name of ABDIMLUCH could be the basis for the female ABDIMELUCHA). Finally, the consistory proposed penalties for non-compliance with the regulations. It also requested to be supplied with the official registers from time to time for control.

The Gubernium had now in its possession all the opinions, pro and con. The official adviser, (Generalerreferent) counsillor Hartmann, after carefully examining all submissions, came to the following conclusion:

1.) According to the laws of 1787, Hebrew names are prohibited; however, the free choice of names is restricted by decrees of Nov. 12 and Dec. 13, 1787. The fear of the Jews that the restrictions on the choice of names will have a detrimental effect on their standing in the country is groundless, since the respect of persons is based on their character, not on their names.

2.) The list of names submitted by the consistory consists of many out-dated and incomprehensible names and therefore contradicts the patent of July 23, 1787.

3.) The proposal of the consistory to ban the use of Christian names should be rejected.

4.) It is suggested to enlarge the existing approved list by 81 male and 60 female names.

(Male: ADOLF, ALBERT, AUGUST, EBERHARD, ERNST, etc.
(Female: ADEL, ALBERTINE, CONSTANCE, ELEONORA, etc.

The Gubernium unanimously adopted these proposals and forwarded them to Vienna on the same day, July 31, 1834. The response in the form of a decree dated Nov. 6, 1834, pointed out that the patent of July 23, 1787 expressly prohibited the use of foreign and incomprehensible names and that it had specified the use of German names. Therefore, the patent gave the Jews the right to choose any German first name for their children. However, Jews were not allowed to change their names. The decree did not mention the newly proposed list.

Thus the decree decided in favour of the Jews; but its text seemed to be too vague and the authorities in Prague felt that the problem of the Jewish names required further study. Counsellor Hartmann surveyed again the entire development of the Josephinian laws and came to the following conclusion: Israelites should be permitted to choose any name mentioned in the decree dated July 31, 1834 if the name is referred to in the old testament or if the name has significance in the German language. The Gubernium was divided on the issue and after a lively debate it voted to reject the Jewish request for free choice of first names.

The Jews of Prague had not expected this kind of response and were quite disappointed.

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Jewish arguments but he also pointed out that FERDINAND was petition to the Gubernium, to allow free choice of first names.

They were speaking in the name of all the Jews of Prague and they asked the Gubernium to instruct the city council on the true sense of the decree of Nov. 6, 1834.

On April 12, 1835, Prague merchant Markus Wiener, complained to the Gubernium that he had tried to register his newly born son as FERDINAND and had been refused by the registrar of the city council. Wiener used all the familiar Jewish arguments but he also pointed out that FERDINAND was the Emperor's name and Jews had used names of Emperors (JOSEF, FRANZ) before, thereby showing their gratitude for the beneficial reform laws. Wiener quoted also from the decree dated Nov 6, 1834. The Gubernium sent the complaint to the city council, but it was mostly interested to find out who had leaked to the Jews the content of the decree of Nov. 6, 1834. The City council investigated but could not find the culprit.

The Jews of Prague, seeing they were not getting anywhere with the Gubernium, appealed again to the court chancellery in Vienna on Nov. 16, 1835. The petition was again immediately returned to the Gubernium in Prague for comment. There the matter came up for discussion on March 28, 1836. Counsellor Hartmann again went over the history of the Josephinian reform laws, but this time he proposed to recommend to the Viennese authorities that Jews should have virtually free choice of first names. Members of the Gubernium were in general agreement with Hartmann's suggestion and Oberburggraf Chotek in his closing speech pointed out that it was the aim of the administration to break down the dividing walls between Jews and Christians. It was his conviction that this important encouragement would be received with gratitude by all Jews.

With these warm remarks the Gubernium ended its session and forwarded its decision to Vienna on the same day. In this changed atmosphere, the court chancellery issued its important decree on July 20, 1836. It stated that the Israelites are not to be restricted in the choice of desired German first names not excluding those used also by Christians. Those first names must not have an addendum which would designate a Christian saint.

The Jews were finally successful. Over the next few years the clear cut decision was properly observed and there were no complaints. From time to time Jews applied for a change in name, but in nearly all cases this was refused.

With the proclamation of the general law regarding civic rights of Dec. 21, 1867 all restrictions came to an end.

What's in a name?

By Dr. Rolf Lederer

A topic which has never played a large role in my thinking has been name changes. Frequently at various lectures I gave, I have been asked about how to research families who have changed their names. My usual response was to ascertain if this was done legally (usually not) in which case there may be official records. In many instances the change occurred in order to sever a link with the past, or to satisfy zealous immigration officials. In modern day Israel, many have Hebraized their surnames, and fortunately the Israeli Government maintains a public record of these changes.

I had traced the Lederer surname to my great-great-great grandfather Tobias Lederer, according to a letter written in Albany, New York, in 1883 by his grandson, Jacob Lederer. Thus, Tobias and his wife had lived in Petrovitz (Bohemia, now part of Czechoslovakia). Until I became aware of this fact, I had claimed my ancestry to be German. So, in the late 70's I attempted to locate records pertaining to my ancestors in Bohemia, through the Czech Embassy in Washington D.C. who directed me to the Czech embassy in Ottawa. My efforts at that time were unsuccessful - I was told there were close to 20 towns with a similar name in Czechoslovakia and it was impossible to search these various sources.

During the Washington seminar in 1988, I attended a lecture given by the Consul General for Czechoslovakia, who was personally prepared to channel requests to the appropriate authorities for a $100 fee. I submitted an application, together with a few additional lists of information that had come to light. After 18 months (and an enquiry on my behalf after about a year), I received a written negative response, together with a refund of $61.00!

Shortly after this, and purely as a result of Glasnost, it became possible to enquire directly to the State Archives in Prague (Statni Ustredni Archiv V Praze, 118 01 Praha 1 - Mala Strana, Karmelitska 2, Czechoslovakia).

So in September 1990 I forwarded my request. In April 1991, I received an acknowledgement from the Czech Consulate in Montreal, who would send me the information discovered for Can. $51.00. About ten days later, I received a one page summary from the Central State Archives:

The family of Tobias Lederer was located in the Books of Familiants (familiant - the Jewish man, allowed by local authorities to marry and have legitimate children, from the beginning of the 1700's until 1848, in Bohemia, there were authorized only 7,600 Jewish families, at any one time). Tobias Simon took on the name of his predecessor on the familiant list, whose surname was Lederer. I was also informed that Tobias was the son of Herschmann and Barbara Simon, thus learning of the names of my great-great-great-great grandparents. I also received copies of birth certificates of two of Tobias' sons.

It is of interest to note that the oldest son of Tobias was given the name Simon and he in turn named his son, my great-grandfather, Bernard (Bar) Simon, whose oldest son in turn was the next Simon Lederer. Hopefully some descendants in the next generation will carry on this tradition.

To find links with families bearing the surname Simon, from Kolesovice (near Rakovnik) shall be my next challenge...
Onomatosis:

(...adj. [Greek: onomatikos. of naming]: "of or pertaining to, or consisting of, names or a name." - WEBSTER'S New Collegiate Dictionary.)

Fascinating reading and essential to Jewish genealogy...

This is another in a series of columns, - retrieved, correlated and translated from this veritable mine of information: "Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für Jüdische Familienforschung". Though more than six decades have passed since a group of dedicated scholars in Berlin, headed by Dr. A. Czellitzer, began the study of genealogy in all earnest, - there is essentially nothing new in our quest - we still search for the origin and meaning of our names, the answers may only sometimes be forgotten...

Throughout the fourteen years of that quarterly publication, members were invited to submit questions and answers, and as we may see from time to time, - the published answers were enlightening, though occasionally confusing and not always totally satisfactory...

Question Nr. 88/ Vol. IV. Nr. 2, 1928.

Who were the parents of Baruch Teixiera and where did they originate? His son Jakob emigrated from North Germany or Schleswig-Holstein to Denmark and settled in Copenhagen, where his daughter Rosa got married to ABRAHAM LEWALD.

Mrs. Ella Mielsziner

Answer Nr.1/Vol IV. Nr. 3, 1928

TEIXIERA or similar sounding Portuguese names occur among Jews and Christians. Teixiera means as much as Tax collector, appraiser or customs officer. At the beginning of the 17th century there was an Inquisitor in Evora (Portugal) named Marcos Teixeira who was also responsible for the Portuguese colony of Brazil. In the middle and later part of the same century a Jewish businessman, Manuel Texeira, lived in Hamburg, - he was a confidant of queen Christina of Sweden. Since the inquirer on this subject states that Baruch Teixiera came from Schleswig-Holstein it must be assumed that he or his ancestors were most probably members of the Portuguese community of Hamburg; one should research the archives of that community.

Arturo Bab, Argentina

Answer Nr. 2/Vol IV. Nr. 4, 1928

It is not certain that Rosa Teixiera was the grand daughter of Baruch. In Elsinore there were two men named Jacob Teixeira; the one, son of Baruch, died 1782; the other, a son of Wulff, died 1811. The gravestone of the latter reads that he died at age 96. But it is a fact that many a person in those days didn't know exactly how old he was, the gravestone often gave false dates. Jacob, son of Wulff, is listed in the tax list of 1762-1765. The other Jacob (son of Baruch) was not resident there at that time. Rosa, daughter of Jacob was born in the following year, 1766. Jacob, son of Wulff, lived in Elsinore at least since 1761 and had several children.

Josef Fischer, Copenhagen

In search of...

SHEM TOV's search column in which readers may advertise their personal field of research in terms of names and localities they are seeking, thus discovering others in pursuit of similar or identical families.

L-1/su91
LEDERER, DR. ROLF
100 Antibes Drive, #1002
Willowdale, Ontario, M2R 3N1
(416) 663-5195
...Seeking information on Samuel L. ZIEGLER Jr. or descendants, last address (in 1947) was 2829 Pacific Ave., San Francisco. Related to ENGLANDER and STEINER families.

L-2/su91
LEDERER, DR. ROLF
100 Antibes Drive, #1002
Willowdale, Ontario, M2R 3N1
(416) 663-5195
...Seeking information on Clara GUTHMANN (née MICHEL) and daughter Clara (married name not known), formerly of Giessen, Germany. Believed to be in USA since before WWII.

**

HENRY WELLISCH, cont'd from page 6

Over the last few years I have expanded my research by consulting numerous libraries, in particular the Robarts Library of the University of Toronto with its enviable collection of Judaica. The Leo Baeck Institute, the Klaui Library in Cincinnati and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York all provided me with much needed background information for my research.

At present I am trying to broaden my knowledge not only of my family background, but also of the Jewish communities of Western Hungary during the 17th, 18th and 19th century. By studying various Jewish family groups with the name of Wellisch I found among others to my surprise that a family of money lenders by that name resided in Vienna before the destruction of the Jewish community in 1420...

A sizable collection of photographs, some of them over 100 years old, are now part of my overall research effort; and many of these splendid old photographs could only be assembled with the help of numerous family members abroad.

In 1988 I decided to join the Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto, as it was then known. The resources of the group, the plethora of newsletters, the monthly meetings and the interaction with fellow members have further broadened my knowledge generally.

When I visited Israel, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Vienna in 1990 I met with the few survivors of my family in Europe, and at the cemetery in Moson I was able to find the graves of many antecedents of my family, amongst them the graves of my great-grandparents.

In conclusion I can say that, advanced as my research now is, I rejoice in the fact that far more can still be done, given the time and patience I have developed over the years.
The officers of the Society are:

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Treasurer: ZELLA GORDON 482-0455
Library: KAILA CRAMER 731-5790
Editor: PETER CULLMAN 964-2196
Hon. Life President: RAYZEL ROBINSON

Typewritten contributions of notes, book reviews or feature articles of interest to readers of SHEM TOV are welcome; all contributions will become the property of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Toronto and will be subject to review and editing if they are published. Material should reach the editor by or before the last day of February, May, August, November, addressed to: PETER CULLMAN, 99 Yorkville Ave., Toronto/OnL., M5R 3K5, Canada. (416) 964-2196.

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